

**SHELTER PLUS CARE
ELIGIBILITY
Eligibility Factors for Applicants**

- I. The S+C program requires that participants in the program meet the following criteria: *(see following pages for details)*
 - A. Homeless, as defined by the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act as funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [[42 USC 11302](#)]; AND
 - B. Disabled, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [[24 CFR 582.5](#)]; AND
 - C. The household's annual income may not exceed the very low income limit, as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the applicant must need the subsidy

- II. Providing eligibility criteria has been met, any previous S+C recipient may re-apply for subsidy, as long as he or she is in good standing with any housing subsidy program administered by DHHS (Shelter Plus Care &/or Bridging Rental Assistance Program). Applicants who owe any DHHS subsidy program for back rent, damages, security deposit, etc. may be considered for re-admission providing that at least one of the following minimum criteria has been met:
 - A. 50% of account balance must be paid before move-in, and the remaining balance must be paid over a term not to exceed 12 months; or
 - B. Establishment of a Representative Payee and a documented payment plan not to exceed 12 months; or
 - C. Charges have been waived via the DHHS Housing Subsidy Appeals Process or DHHS Grievance Process.

HOMELESS

I. Definition of Homelessness

In general, a person is considered homeless if, without HUD assistance, he or she would have to spend the night in a homeless shelter or in a place not meant for human habitation.

More specifically, an individual is considered homeless if he or she is:

- ❑ sleeping in an emergency shelter;
- ❑ sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings;
- ❑ spending a short time (30 consecutive days or less) in a hospital or other institution, but ordinarily sleeping in the types of places mentioned above;
- ❑ living in transitional/supportive housing but having come from streets or emergency shelters;
- ❑ being evicted within a week from a private dwelling unit and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing; or
- ❑ being discharged from an institution and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing.
 - Note: Individuals being discharged from the Riverview Psychiatric Center (formerly Augusta Mental Health Institute) or the Bangor Mental Health Institute are not considered homeless. Per the DHHS Discharge Plan persons can not be discharged to homeless situations from these institutions and therefore they are not eligible for SPC. BRAP is a viable option for most persons leaving these institutions.

II. Verification of Homelessness

Homeless Situation:	Then you need to:	Documentation Required:
On the streets or places not meant for human habitation	Document homeless status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification from an outreach worker or organization on respective agency letterhead • <u>If unable to verify in this manner</u>, the participant or a staff member may prepare a short written statement about the participant's previous living place and have the participant sign the statement and date it
Emergency Shelter	Verify from the emergency shelter staff that the person has been residing at the emergency shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, signed, and dated verification from the shelter on their letterhead, stating the individual has been a resident
Transitional/Supportive Housing but having come from the streets or emergency shelter	Verify with the transitional housing staff that the participant has been residing at the transitional housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signed statement from the transitional housing staff indicating that the individual is a resident; <u>and</u> 2. Referring agency's signed and dated verification (from the participant's file) stating the individual's homeless status when he/she entered the program
Short-term stay (up to 30 consecutive days) in an institution but having come from the streets or in an emergency shelter	Verify from the institution staff that the participant has been residing at the institution and was homeless before entering the institution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written verification, on letterhead, from institution's staff that the participant has been residing in the institution for less than 31 days; <u>and</u> 2. Information on the previous living situation. Preferably, this will be the institution's written, signed, and dated verification (on letterhead) of the individual's homeless status when he/she entered the institution.

Homeless Situation:	Then you need to:	Documentation Required:
Being discharged from a longer stay in an institution (Not Riverview or Bangor Mental Health Institute)	Verify from the institution staff that the participant has been residing at the institution for more than 30 consecutive days and will be homeless if not provided assistance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written verification from the institution's staff (signed and dated) that the participant is being discharged within the week before receiving homeless assistance; <u>and</u> 2. Signed and dated documentation with income of the participant, what efforts have been made to obtain housing, and why the participant would be living on the street or in an emergency shelter if not for the homeless assistance
Individual within seven days of eviction from a private dwelling with no residence identified and lacking resources/support needed to obtain housing (Note: The application cannot be accepted until the individual is within the last seven days of eviction)	Verify eviction and that the individual would be homeless if not provided assistance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A copy of the notice to quit; <u>and</u> 2. Signed and dated documentation with the income of participant, what efforts have been made to obtain housing, and why the participant would be living on the street or in an emergency shelter without the homeless assistance
Temporarily staying at a hotel, motel or other location, <u>in lieu of</u> a shelter bed, due to unavailability of a shelter bed	Verify with shelter staff the unavailability of a shelter bed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written statement, signed and dated on shelter letterhead, stating that a shelter bed is unavailable; <u>and</u> 2. Written document stating why the individual cannot remain in temporary living situation (i.e. hotel, motel, or other location)

Homeless Situation:	Then you need to:	Documentation Required:
Temporarily staying at a hotel, motel or other location, <u>in lieu of</u> a shelter bed, due to the individual being prohibited entry into the shelter	Verify with shelter staff that the individual is not allowed to stay at the shelter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written statement, signed and dated on shelter letterhead, stating that the individual is prohibited from the shelter; <u>and</u> 2. Written document stating why the individual cannot remain in temporary living situation (i.e. hotel, motel, or other location)
Temporarily staying at a hotel, motel or other location, <u>in lieu of</u> a shelter bed, due to the individual's clinical condition	Verify with individual's licensed clinician (whose license allows for providing a mental health diagnosis) the clinical reason(s) why the individual cannot stay at a shelter.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written statement, signed and dated on licensed clinician's letterhead, stating that the individual cannot stay at the shelter; 2. Written documentation stating why the individual cannot remain in temporary living situation (i.e. hotel, motel, or other location)

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DISABILITY

I. Definition of Disability

The definition of disabled [[24 CFR 582.5](#)] that is used as the basis for determining eligibility in the S+C program is:

"Persons with disabilities" – a household composed of one or more persons at least one of whom is an adult who has a disability.

1. A person shall be considered to have a disability if such person has a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration; substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and is of such nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.

2. A person will also be considered to have a disability if he or she has a developmental disability, which is a severe, chronic disability that –

- (i) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments;
- (ii) Is manifested before the person attains age 22;
- (iii) Is likely to continue indefinitely;
- (iv) Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity;
 - (A) Self-care
 - (B) Receptive and expressive language;
 - (C) Learning;
 - (D) Mobility;
 - (E) Self-direction;
 - (F) Capacity for independent living; and
 - (G) Economic self-sufficiency; and
- (v) Reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic care, treatment, or other services that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

Key to the definition is determining that the impairment is of long-continued and indefinite duration AND **substantially impedes** the person's ability to live independently. For example, drug or alcohol abuse or an HIV/AIDS condition that does not substantially impede a person's ability to live independently **does not** qualify as a disability in the S+C Program. Written documentation that a person's disability meets the program definition must come from a credentialed psychiatric or medical professional trained to make such a determination. The possession of a title such as case manager or substance abuse counselor does not by itself qualify a person to make that determination. "Self-certification" is also unacceptable.

LAA's must have written documentation in their tenant files that qualifies each participant as having met the program definition of "disabled."

II. Verification of Disability

- a) Verified through signed Verification of Disability Form or
- b) Verified through receipt of Supplemental Security Disability Income (SSDI) if the LAA obtains written verification from the Social Security Administration that the disability is one of the targeted populations within the grant